

**USDA Forest Service State & Private Forestry
Federal FY 2010 - Western Competitive Grant Project Narrative
Uniform Resource Plan and Endorsement System
Oregon Department of Forestry
Private Forests Program**

Project Synopsis

This project uses federal funds over a two-year period to develop and pilot a uniform resource plan and endorsement system. The uniform system will facilitate a common approach to resource management planning and leverage services of existing planning entities, including Oregon Department of Forest (ODF), American Forest Foundation/Oregon Tree Farm System (AFF- OTFS), Association of Consulting Foresters (ACF), Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Northwest Natural Resource Group (NNRG), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI), Oregon Small Woodlands Association (OSWA), Oregon State University Extension (OSU), USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), USDA-Forest Service Cooperative Forestry (FS-COOP). This approach integrates the planning efforts of multiple resource entities, improving coordination and reducing duplication. The system will provide mutual recognition of uniform base plan content with specific endorsements such as 1) an ODFW wildlife habitat conservation and management plan; 2) NRCS Forest Management Activity Plan; 3) ODF (USDA-FS) forest stewardship plan, 4) AFF tree farm certified plan, and 5) FSC-certified management plan. The project may develop a single web-portal for efficient plan development.

The project will also pilot, evaluate, and implement the new planning system in the three regions in Oregon, using the recently developed coached planning process. An existing group of cooperators has successfully piloted this mentor-based planning approach, which actively engaged professional foresters to mentor forestland owners. The coached planning process uses newly available, county-based GIS systems to provide photos, maps and other basic data to assist forestland owners develop practical useful management plans. The project will evaluate the base plan and endorsement scheme for developing new plans, as well as updating existing plans.

This project supports the theme of conserving working forests by facilitating other social and economic incentives to encourage retention of important forested landscapes. Most incentive programs require management plans and some, e.g., carbon markets like the Chicago Climate Exchange, require certified forests. The endorsement system will facilitate certification by endorsement criteria recognized by third party certifiers such as American Forest Foundation (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) certified) and Forest Stewardship Council. The project will enhance public benefits from trees and forest by facilitating improved management on family forestlands, which occupies ecologically important, lower elevation settings, often near residential areas. In the Willamette Valley, much of the remaining valley's hallmark habitat type, Oregon white oak, exists on family forestlands (more than 263,000 acres). The project protects forest from harm by facilitating plans that improve forest health and reduces fire hazard.

Project Partners

American Forest Foundation/Oregon Tree Farm System, Association of Consulting Foresters, Forest Stewardship Council, Northwest Natural Resource Group, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Forest Resources Institute, Oregon Small Woodlands Association, Oregon State University Extension, USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service, USDA-Forest Service Cooperative Forestry.

Project Background and Scope:

Oregon has been helping landowners develop management plans since the 1970s. Landowners need written management plans to meet certification, incentive program, and regulatory demands. Less than 10% of Oregon's woodland owners have written plans, covering 17% of Oregon's family forestland acres (~800,000 out of 4,668,000 acres). Thousands of family forestlands owners need written plans and certification. The Forestry Program for Oregon identifies family forestlands as an important provider of

societal values, as they have diverse forests and objectives. The Oregon Board of Forestry has identified outreach to family forestland owners as a key strategy for the Department, and has established a Committee for Family Forestlands (CFF) to address the issues. The recent CFF sponsored symposium identified engaging the wider community of family forestland owners and economic challenges of family forestland owners as two of the top 10 issues facing family forestland owners.

Project Deliverables:

Operational Component Deliverables - This project will:

- Convene Oregon summit conference to develop acceptable base plan format and endorsement system (base plan content will meet 2009 Forest Stewardship Program Standards and Guidelines).
- Develop a base plan format and template for use by agencies and landowners.
- Develop a criteria-based endorsement process, which clearly specifies how to receive an endorsement from participating entities (e.g., AFF-OTFS, FSC, ODFW, and NRCS).
- Develop a Standardized interagency endorsement (e.g., MOU) agreement to expedite uniform recognition of plans.
- Document and summarize barriers and solutions to developing a uniform base plan.

Educational Component Deliverables - Management planning, particularly coached planning is essentially an educational process. This project will:

- Test the draft uniform resource plan and endorsement scheme in each of the three regions in the state.
- Use an adaptive approach to the final base plan format, dropping inefficient mechanisms in favor of simple or easily duplicable mechanisms.
- Document and summarize lessons learned from the pilot. The OSU-extension program will develop an independent evaluation process as part of pilot design.

This project provides a streamlined process to increase efficacy of management planning and to reach more family forestland owners. The process will empower family forestland owners to manage forestlands to improve return to landowners and benefits provided to society.

Estimated Project Timeline

June 1, 2010 - September 30, 2010.	Project planning; staff orientation, partner and stakeholder meetings; conference planning.
April 4-5, 2011	Hold summit / conference; develop base plan format; develop endorsement process; develop interagency endorsement agreement; document barriers to developing uniform plan.
April 5- June 30, 2011	Develop management plan template and guidelines for testing.
July 1-November 30, 2011	Beta test new uniform plan format with consultants (ACF), Tree Farm, NRCS, FSC and through 2 OSU Extension mentored planning workshops.
December 1, 2011-February 29, 2012	Revised template and guidelines.
March 1, 2012-June 30, 2012	Deliver training sessions for management plan writers and mentored planning instructors.
July 1, 2012 - September 30, 2012	Document lessons learned from the pilot; make recommendations for refinement and implementation of the endorsement process.
September 30, 2012	Final Project Report Submitted, Project Complete